

grain; to obtain the latter, the whole flock would often alight on the ground and eagerly devour the scattered grain. As spring advanced they were usually seen, especially early in the morning, in the top of some tree, singing or chattering noisily, thus attracting the attention of nearly every passer-by. Their loud, clear, rather harsh, piping notes, uttered in concert, reminded one forcibly of the familiar chorus of a flock of Rusty Blackbirds in the spring, and have also been likened to the shrill piping arising from some frog pond on a quiet summer evening. In Iowa, the Evening Grosbeak may be regarded as a rare and erratic winter visitor, though its appearance is perhaps most regular in the northern portions of the State. It arrives from the north about the middle of November and remains until May. Prior to last winter it has been observed in the vicinity of Iowa City but once—in February, 1884. Correspondents have also reported this species from Charles City, in March, 1879; Grinnell, December and April, and Burlington in the southeastern part of the State.—C. R. KEYES, *Iowa City, Iowa.*

*Loxia curvirostra minor* again at Yemassee, S. C.—On November 20, 1887, two Red Crossbills were seen at Yemassee, S. C., by my collector who shot large numbers in April for me. —ARTHUR T. WAYNE, *Charleston, S. C.*

A Philadelphia Vireo and a Cobweb.—On September 13, 1886, while collecting in a thicket near Bardstown, Kentucky, my companion, a small boy, called my attention to the peculiar actions of a bird eight or ten paces in advance of us. It proved to be a Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphica*) suspended by the tip of its right wing from a twig at a distance of three or four feet from the ground, violently struggling to free itself. Flying above, within a few feet of it, was another individual of the same species, an apparently interested and distressed witness of the strange performance. Both birds were shot, and upon examination I discovered that the first one had become entangled in a sticky, cobwebby substance that was found to be quite common during that season in the locality mentioned. The end of the wing was completely 'gummed up' with the viscons filaments, and the struggles of the captive had twisted the web into a slender and elastic but strong cord, the other end of which was attached to the twig. The webs in question I found only in thickets, and had been much annoyed by often running against them and getting the glutinous stuff on my face and hands. It is doubtless produced by some spider, but I have never recognized the species. However, I think it improbable that the wily Arachnid deliberately attempts the capture of such large game, and in this particular instance it was doubtless as much surprised as the cockney sportsman in 'Punch,' who fired at a hare and killed a calf.—CHARLES WICKLIFFE BECKHAM, *Washington, D. C.*

*Helminthophila leucobronchialis* in Pennsylvania.—A specimen of this bird was taken, August 31, 1887, in the central part of Chester Co.,

Penn., on the edge of a dense swamp. It differs from the type in being more washed with yellow below, and olive above. Dr. Fisher (to whom the bird was sent for identification) writes that it closely resembles his specimen from Englewood, N. J. (See *Auk*, IV, p. 348).—WITMER STONE, *Germantown, Pa.*

**The Yellow-breasted Chat Breeding in Malden, Mass.**—On June 2, 1887, while exploring a large tract of wooded swamp in the eastern part of Malden, I was so fortunate as to discover a nest of the Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*). The bird was sitting when I approached the nest which was almost completely concealed by the thickly-clustering leaves of a dense, stunted witch-hazel bush growing in a partially cleared tract of swamp. She sat very close, and made little complaint when she flew. The nest held five eggs, the full complement, which I found to have been incubated a few days. I visited the nest several times, nearly always finding both parent birds near it. A brood of three was successfully reared, and left the nest on June 19. The nest is now in my possession. It was built three and a half feet from the ground, and is very thick-walled and deep. On June 29 and 30 I saw a Chat that might have been the male of this pair. On both occasions he was in a dense thicket fully a mile from the nest.—H. P. JOHNSON, *Everett, Mass.*

**Sylvania mitrata at Germantown, Pennsylvania, in November.**—On November 19, 1887, Mr. Herbert Brown, of Germantown, presented me with a Warbler that he had just shot, and which proved to be a Hooded Warbler (*Sylvania mitrata*) in immature plumage. The bird was taken in a cabbage patch where it was apparently feeding on insects.—WITMER STONE, *Germantown, Pa.*

**On the Nesting of Palmer's Thrasher.**—In 'The Auk,' Vol. IV, No. 2, Col. N. S. Goss asks: "What constitutes a full set of eggs?" In reply I offer no suggestions, but pass my observations, which were carefully and conscientiously made, to the more mature judgment of others.

Among the birds most common on the cactus-covered plains of Arizona, is Palmer's Thrasher (*H. c. palmeri*). I particularly speak of this bird because of my long familiarity with it. From observations made in 1885 and 1886 I was led to believe that three eggs constituted a full set, but my oölogical notes of 1887 on this particular point are much at variance with those of the two preceding years.

March 6, 1885, I found a nest of this bird containing four young sufficiently feathered to fly. I secured several nests containing eggs—generally three—but four was no uncommon number. I also noted other nests containing a like number of young, but none of the latter so far advanced as the ones first mentioned. By the 13th nesting was well under way, not only with the *palmeri*, but also with the Bendire's Thrasher (*H. bendirei*) and Cactus Wren (*C. brunneicapillus*). I cite these additional cases as proof of the early nesting of birds that year. Throughout the next several